

# The evolving (re)categorisations of refugees throughout the 'Refugee/Migrant crisis'

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# **The evolving (re)categorisations of refugees throughout the ‘Refugee/Migrant crisis’**

## **Abstract**

The UK media’s reporting of events in 2015 contained constantly evolving categorisations of people attempting to reach Europe and the UK, each with different implications for their treatment. A discourse analysis of UK media outputs charts the development of the terminology used to present the ‘crisis’ and those people involved. First ‘Mediterranean migrant crisis’ was used to present those involved as ‘migrants’ to be prevented from reaching Europe. Next it became a ‘Calais Migrant crisis’ in which ‘migrants’ were constructed as a threat to UK security, and then the ‘European Migrant crisis’ an ongoing threat to Europe. Photographs of a drowned child led to a shift to a ‘refugee crisis’ in which ‘refugees’ were presented in a humane and sympathetic way. When terrorist attacks were linked with the ‘crisis’ ‘refugees’ reverted to ‘migrants’. Findings are discussed regarding the impact of categorisation on debates about the inclusion and exclusion of refugees.

**Key words:** Refugee crisis; Migrant crisis; Mediterranean crisis; Refugees; Migrants; Discursive Psychology; Discourse Analysis

## **The ‘crisis’**

This paper addresses the varying ways in which refugees attempting to reach Europe from 2015 onwards have been represented in the UK media. It will be shown that while it came to be understood as a ‘crisis’ throughout and beyond 2015, there was an evolution in the representation and conceptualisation of the exact *type* of ‘crisis’ that this was: starting as a ‘Mediterranean migrant crisis’, becoming a ‘Calais Migrant crisis’, a ‘European Migrant crisis’ and briefly a ‘refugee crisis’. A crisis can be understood as a rarely-occurring event challenging the existing order. This can result in a collapse in the legitimacy of existing ways of working and the production of new lenses for seeing social problems (Habermas, 1975). There has been a proliferation of references to a crisis regarding the recent mass movement of people and the framing of this as a crisis for European institutions which intersects with debates about the European economic crisis (Heller et al., 2016). As will be shown here, the terms used to represent the crisis in the media have a major impact on how the ‘crisis’ is understood and how refugees implicated in the crisis are presented whether or not they are included or excluded from Europe.

Whilst refugees attempting to reach Europe is not a new phenomenon (Pugh, 2001) the issue took centre stage in the media in 2015 following reports of a number of cases of boats full of refugees crossing the Mediterranean to Europe that sank, killing many people on board. There are two main sea crossings to Europe – the Eastern and Central routes. On the Eastern route from Turkey to Greece 90% of arrivals in 2015 were Syrians, Iraqis and Afghans. On the Central route from North Africa to Italy there was much more diversity of origin but almost everyone had to transit through Libya, which is chaotic, lawless and mired in conflict (Crawley, Duvell, Sigona, McMahon, and Jones, 2016).

The term crisis came about following deaths in April 2015 on the Central route, but media attention soon shifted to the Eastern route. During 2015 over one million refugees crossed into Europe (most, 972,500, via the Mediterranean, UNHCR, 2015) and an estimated 3,692 died trying (IOM, 2015). In whatever way the ‘crisis’ is presented, it clearly represents a humanitarian tragedy in its own right, in addition to the humanitarian tragedies that the refugees are fleeing. Despite this, refugees arriving in Europe are often presented negatively as threatening the European way of life and as serious economic burdens (Goodman, Burke, Liebling, & Zasada, 2015). Debates about refugees are part of wider debates about migration, which has been shown to be an issue of major concern in the UK and across Europe (Sirriyeh, 2013a, McMahon 2015).

## ***Categories of ‘refugees’***

Discursive psychology (Edwards & Potter, 1992) focusses on how language use relates to social actions. It has been used to address the ways in which refugees are presented, supporting the view that some are presented in extremely negative ways (Burke & Goodman, 2012). This is often the outcome of a separation of people into ‘deserving’ and ‘undeserving’ categories of migrant or refugee (Crawley, McMahon & Jones, 2016). Discursive research has shown that the ways in which refugees are presented have a major implication on claims about how they should be treated. Lynn and Lea (2003) showed how a distinction between ‘bogus’ and ‘genuine’ asylum

seekers is used to cast doubt on the legitimacy of all people seeking asylum because the 'bogus' category suggests that there are many people posing as asylum seekers (refugees awaiting a decision on application for asylum) who are not really refugees at all. By distinguishing deserving from undeserving or 'genuine' from 'bogus' asylum seekers, people present themselves as caring about some ('genuine') refugees' wellbeing while also arguing against refugee rights in general. In this way, stating that most refugees are 'bogus' casts doubt on the legitimacy of all asylum seekers. Meanwhile, the state can also continue to refer to the UK's proud record of welcoming refugees which is so frequently observed upon in Home Office documents (Sirriyeh, 2013b). Others (Goodman & Speer 2007; Kirkwood, Goodman, McVittie & McKinlay, 2015) have shown that within debates about refugees and asylum seekers politicians and lay people refer to economic migrants, illegal migrants and refugees. They showed how within debates speakers explicitly topicalise and argue about the terms that should be used to describe refugees.

The focus of this article is on the evolution of the struggle between different ways of categorising refugees. Categories are social constructions determined through talk, but they nevertheless have real world implications for those people who become categorised because they define 'who is who', and therefore also 'who gets what' (McMahon 2015). The reason that category use features so prominently in debates about refugees and migrants is because different categories infer very different qualities and circumstances. 'Refugees' are presented as deserving of support because refugee is a moral category that infers people in need of safety who hold some position of social worth based upon their vulnerability. They are therefore people to whom there is an ethical duty to support (Morris, 2012). Other categories, including 'bogus asylum seekers', 'asylum seekers', 'migrants', 'economic migrants' and 'illegal migrants' may instead be presented as undeserving of support because these are immoral categories. The inference with these categories is that they are people out to unfairly get what they can from European states (Anderson, 2013). Even if they are presented as victims it is inferred that they are a 'burden' in some way and that local populations will have to sacrifice something to support them. It is therefore important to examine how 'refugees' are categorised in debates about them as this can shape calls for their inclusion or exclusion and therefore whether or not they are able to reach safety or not.

It is known that category use around refugees has a major impact on debates about how refugees should be treated. However, to date there is no systematic attempt to analyse the ways in which the prominent 'migrant/refugee crisis' reporting uses categories and what this may achieve despite this crisis having seemingly varying names and being the most high profile news story featuring refugees in recent times. The purpose of this paper is to address what terms have been used to describe the 'crisis' and to ascertain what impact the names for the crisis have for the representation of the refugees involved and for claims about how they should be treated.

## **Method**

The theoretical approach utilised in this research is discursive psychology, which has been shown to produce a detailed understanding of terms used in debates about refugees and migration. The method associated with this approach is discourse

analysis, which seeks to identify patterns of talk/text and what these are used to do. Within discourse analysis there is a continuum of positions. The version used here is in line with discursive social psychology (Gibson, 2009) which draws on the systematic and fine grained analysis of discourse while also adopting a critical stance that seeks to identify ‘the social and political consequences of discursive patterning’ (Wetherell, 1998, p. 405) which in this case are likely to be ways in which problematic treatment of weaker groups may be legitimised (e.g. Goodman & Speer, 2007).

Data for analysis were collected by the first author by searching for stories on the crisis on major UK news sources<sup>1</sup> from the start of 2015 to May 2016 using the term ‘crisis’ in the headline. This generated an extremely large amount of data: A Lexis Library search reaches the maximum 1000 hits without exhausting all matches. Matches that did not relate to refugees or migrants were removed (rather than risking pre-empting findings by searching specific terms for refugees/migrants) to reduce the corpus (but still gaining the maximum 1000 hits on Lexis Library). A manual search of the remaining articles was used for the analysis. The data corpus was searched for different uses of terms for the ‘crisis’. Articles that featured the terms were analysed by the first author in more detail using discourse analysis to ascertain their function, particularly regarding the categorisation of refugee/migrant that was inferred through the use of the term. Particular attention is given to the headline of the article, as this frames the remainder of the article and has the most dramatic impact. Extracts featured in the analysis represent exemplars of the ways in which the terms were used.

## **Analysis**

The analysis demonstrated that there was a shifting and evolving use of terms for the crisis and categorisations of the people making their way to Europe. Five general phases of the crisis can be delineated: (1) Mediterranean migrant crisis, (2) Calais migrant crisis, (3) Europe’s Migrant crisis, and (4) Refugee crisis, after which it returned to being (5) the migrant crisis again. Each of these broadly followed notable events and inferred a different category of person involved, with different suggested responses to those people. It will be shown that some of the phases developed slowly, while other changes occurred quickly in response to dramatic events.

### ***A Mediterranean Migrant Crisis***

The first reference to any kind of crisis was to a ‘Mediterranean migrant crisis’ in which the sinking of boats carrying people trying to reach Europe led to the drowning of thousands of people. This first example was featured in the news in May 2015

Extract One: Channel 4 news, 11<sup>th</sup> May 2015<sup>2</sup>

1. *Headline:* Mediterranean migrant crisis: UK backs gunships over quotas
2. *Subheading:* Plans to force European Union member states to receive a "fair"
3. share of refugees seeking asylum in Europe are to be fought by the UK, in favour
4. of deploying gunships to tackle trafficking gangs.

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<sup>1</sup> The Daily Mail, The Express, The Times, The Sun, The Star, The Guardian, The Independent (including i) (all standard editions), BBC website, ITV news, Channel 4 news, Huffington Post

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.channel4.com/news/migrants-europe-britain-cameron-refugee-quotas-mediterranean>

This particular term for the news event includes three categorisation terms. The Mediterranean firmly locates the event as happening away from the UK so that this is not a national issue. However, as the Mediterranean Sea marks the southern frontier of Europe it does mean that the story has relevance to the UK (as also signalled by the explicit involvement of the UK). The reference to 'migrant' is a general term for all people moving from country to country and has been shown to be a negative category when used in reference to refugees because it is disputing their claimed identity and motivations for migration (Goodman & Speer, 2007). The final term 'crisis' suggests that the event is a serious problem, although it is not immediately clear if the crisis is one of the 'migrants' drowning or for Europe which has to accommodate them as discussed earlier.

The reference to the UK emphasises that this is a national issue with a potential impact on people in the UK. The support for 'gunships' suggests that the crisis is so serious, especially if it means that the UK may be forced to take a share (quota) of people, that it needs a military intervention. What we see in this headline is that 'migrants' are a serious problem. The UK does not want to accept them and will support military action to prevent them reaching the country. This goes beyond the military and war analogies that have been found to support the exclusion of migrants (Van der Valk, 2003) because it is implying an actual military campaign. In this case 'migrant' refers to an immoral and problematic group that are to be excluded.

There is variation in the terms used to describe migrants, so although the headline refers to a Mediterranean *migrant* crisis, where migrants are to be excluded, the subheading refers to refugees seeking asylum (3). 'Refugee' has been shown to be a morally superior category compared with 'migrant' (Kirkwood et al., 2015) but what is of particular interest here is the conflation of the categories (Goodman & Speer 2007) which means that refugees, a specific group of migrants, come to be seen as part of the wider category 'migrants', who are not necessarily people fleeing conflict or protected under international law. However, instead of referring to the situation from which the refugees are fleeing, the subheading highlights 'trafficking gangs' (4) as the problem that needs dealing with. This means that while migrants (who are also referred to as refugees) are presented as problematic and to be excluded, the military force is to be directed towards a different immoral and problematic category, traffickers, meaning that the migrants are not directly blamed for the crisis.

### ***A Calais Migrant crisis***

The next version of the crisis moved much closer to the UK, now shifting to Calais, as can be seen in the following example.

Extract Two: Huffington Post, 29<sup>th</sup> July 2015<sup>3</sup>

1. *Headline*: Calais Migrant Crisis Explained: 14 Reasons People Risk Their Lives
2. To Claim Asylum In Britain
3. *Video caption*: Raw: Migrants Try to Breach Eurotunnel Security

The only change to this version of the name for the crisis is the move from Mediterranean to Calais. This is a subtle change to the name that became prominent in

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2015/07/29/calais-migrant-crisis-why-happening-cause\\_n\\_7896038.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2015/07/29/calais-migrant-crisis-why-happening-cause_n_7896038.html)

the summer of 2015. Even though at this point many people were still struggling to cross the sea into Europe, the crisis has now moved to the border with the UK. The crisis is still about migrants, but now the emphasis is much more explicitly on the impact to the UK as the migrants are attempting to reach Britain (2). The caption to the video (directly below the headline) also refers to ‘migrants’ which indicates that it is migrants (rather than refugees or any other category) that constitute this crisis. The caption referring to breaching Eurotunnel security (3) works as a war and invasion analogy (e.g. Van der Valk, 2003) where migrants are attempting to force their way into the UK by getting past a line of British security. Migrants attempting to reach the UK from Calais, like the drowning of people crossing the Mediterranean, was not new at this point, but what was new was the framing of this as part of the wider crisis, and in this case a very real and direct threat to the UK. In sum, the Calais migrant crisis functioned to present migrants as a genuine threat to the UK’s border. Again, the crisis was not one for the migrants, but one for the UK who may have to deal with them. Migrants again are a problem, making illegitimate claims for protection in the UK and needing to be excluded.

### *Europe’s Migrant Crisis*

The next term used to describe the crisis was ‘Europe’s Migrant Crisis’. Here the crisis is presented as ongoing and as widespread across all of Europe.

Extract Three: The Guardian, 10<sup>th</sup> August 2015<sup>4</sup>

1. *Headline*: 10 truths about Europe’s migrant crisis
2. *Subheading*: British ministers including Theresa May and Philip Hammond have
3. made hair-raising claims about the dangers of migrants entering the country. But
4. do the facts bear them out?

Rather than the focus on either the Mediterranean or Calais, now the crisis is a pan-European one. During the summer of 2015 the crisis was a dominant news story that contained diverse elements, including the continued cases of people drowning in the Mediterranean and people attempting to get through the channel tunnel, but now also included cases of other European countries (notably Greece) struggling to deal with the large numbers of people arriving. One issue of concern in some parts of the British media was the impact of refugees who had arrived in Kos on British holidaymakers (e.g. The Telegraph<sup>5</sup>). The widespread nature of the crisis is therefore conveyed in the naming of the entire continent, so this new heading evolved from the previous heading. It is noteworthy that it is Europe’s crisis; again it is not a crisis for the refugees, but for Europe. Europe is constructed as the victim that is experiencing the problem imposed on it by others and is presented as struggling to cope, partly because it contains so many dimensions. The subheading of this particular article however focuses explicitly on Britain, so even though it is Europe’s crisis it is only the impact on Britain that is salient. The subheading itself is critical of the ministers it names (2) by implying that the truth does not support their claims, but in doing so it nevertheless refers to migrants, the undeserving category. It is worth noting that later in the article, mirroring examples identified by Goodman and Speer (2007) on debates a decade earlier, it is claimed that “Far from being propelled by economic migrants, this crisis

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/aug/10/10-truths-about-europes-refugee-crisis>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/europe/greece/articles/Greece-migrant-crisis-Should-I-visit-Kos/>

is mostly about refugees” which does work to reposition the crisis as about the morally deserving category. As it transpired, a new event meant that the crisis did shift to being presented as based on refugees, rather than migrants.

### *A refugee crisis*

On 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2015 another boat capsized killing passengers attempting to cross from Turkey to Greece. Whilst this event was not unusual, one of the children who had drowned, Alan Kurdi, was photographed after washing up on the beach at Bodrum and the photographs were widely published in media around the world. This had a major impact on the debate<sup>6</sup>, so that it now changed from being a migrant crisis to being a refugee crisis, as can be seen in the following extract.

Extract four: The Independent, 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2015<sup>7</sup>

1. *Headline*: Refugee crisis: Number of people reaching Europe in 2015 passes 1
2. million
3. *Photo caption*: Refugees disembark from a dinghy after their arrival from Turkey
4. on the Greek island of Lesbos, on Saturday, Dec. 12, 2015

The shift from migrant crisis (with its various locations) to refugee crisis is extremely significant. Rather than the negative and undeserving category of migrants, there has now been a shift to a much more deserving and morally acceptable category. There is also a notable shift in the agency of the refugees (here as in extract two referred to as people) who are now ‘reaching’ (1) Europe rather than entering or breeching it; the war and invasion analogy is now gone, despite the reference to extremely large numbers of people (1-2). The photograph caption refers to refugees (not migrants) who are again presented in a sympathetic way: they are now simply ‘disembarking’ and arriving and the reference to dinghy suggests that these people are attempting to reach safety and are being rescued.

At this point, all BBC news reporting referred to the ‘refugee’ rather than the ‘migrant’ crisis, suggesting that the photographs of Alan Kurdi affected a policy change. Unlike the previous crisis names that slowly evolved throughout the year, this dramatic incident and the associated photographs resulted in a very quick change (Parker, Naper & Goodman (in press) demonstrate that the change took place within a week in three separate countries). As ‘refugee’ is a moral category this shift was particularly noteworthy because at this point those affected by the crisis were largely presented as needing support. Indeed at this point there was a relative outpouring of support for refugees with a resulting increase in local action, including British people travelling to Calais to assist refugees living there. However, it should be noted that while this period did include sympathy for refugees, this sympathy was largely directed towards Syrian refugees, rather than to all refugees from different countries. This mirrored UK government policy, which over the preceding months had changed, raising rejection rates for claims from Eritrean and Afghan asylum seekers, (Refugee council, 2015). News reporting of the humanitarian disaster in Syria was also prominent and clearly linked into reporting of the ‘refugee crisis’.

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<sup>6</sup> For more on the impact of these images see <http://visualsocialmedialab.org/blog/the-iconic-image-on-social-media-a-rapid-response-to-the-death-of-aylan-kurdi>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/refugee-crisis-number-reaching-europe-2015-passes-1-million-syria-afghanistan-turkey-greece-a6782611.html>



### *Return to a 'Migrant crisis'*

On November 13<sup>th</sup> 2015 there were terrorist attacks across Paris which killed 130 people. Another terrorist attack in Paris was attempted in January 2016 by a man falsely claiming to be a refugee. One aspect of these stories was an association with the crisis, in that migration into Europe was presented as a method for terrorists to gain access to European cities to attack them. Within days of the November Paris attacks, refugees had been implicated (e.g. The Express<sup>8</sup>). This eventually resulted in the reversion of the crisis from a 'refugee crisis' back into a 'migrant crisis', as can be seen in the following extract from February 2016:

Extract five: Mail Online, 4<sup>th</sup> February 2016<sup>9</sup>

1. *Headline*: Paris terrorist ringleader bragged he entered France among a group of
2. 90 jihadis and claimed the migrant crisis had made it easy for them to travel
3. freely across Europe
4. ● Abdelhamid Abaaoud posed as a Romanian migrant following the attacks
5. ● He boasted that the migrant crisis helped ISIS move Islamists into Europe
6. ● Abaaoud looked 'happy' when he spoke about the attacks, it is claimed
7. ● The Belgian-born jihadi also said he entered Paris with 90 other extremists

Whilst this article is about one of the terrorists involved in the Paris attack, it clearly references the 'migrant crisis' (2 and 5). The terrorist's claim that the crisis facilitated movement around Europe (2-3) is presented as especially problematic, particularly through the references to 'terrorist ringleader' (1) and 'bragged' (1) and the large number of potential terrorists (2) which work to present the crisis as allowing enemies of Europe easy access to do harm. In addition to allowing easy access the first sub-heading (4) is used to argue that the crisis allowed the terrorist easy cover to escape capture. The second sub-heading (5) reiterates, and therefore emphasises, the point that the migrant crisis is beneficial for the terrorist group ISIS. However, the fourth sub-heading (7) suggests that the terrorist was born in Europe and therefore did not access Europe as a result of the crisis.

By quoting the perpetrator himself, it is claimed that terrorists are able to enter Europe as a result of the migrant crisis; the crisis is therefore presented as working to the advantage of terrorists. Therefore, the crisis is presented as a serious security threat to the whole of Europe and as being so convenient for terrorists that it allows them to mock Europeans. It is this linking of the threat of terrorism with migration (a common anti-asylum argument, Goodman & Burke, 2011) that functions to present the crisis as dangerous for Europe. While the 'refugee crisis' presented those trying to reach Europe as requiring safety, the 'migrant crisis' presents those people as extremely dangerous. Once again 'migrant' refers to an immoral and problematic category of people that needs to be prevented from reaching Europe.

### **Discussion**

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/619835/Paris-attacks-refugee-centre-arrest-Germany-France-Belgium-Terrorism>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3431479/Paris-terrorist-ringleader-bragged-migrant-crisis-easy-Islamists-travel-freely-Europe-reveals-woman-led-police-him.html>

This analysis has demonstrated the different terms used to describe the movement of people into Europe from 2015 until the present. When those involved were presented as migrants, a negative and problematic category, they were presented as a threat that had to be controlled and prevented from entering Europe. As the 'Mediterranean crisis' went on it became a 'Calais Migrant crisis' in which it was still threatening and problematic 'migrants' who were involved. This time, however, they were presented as a threat to the UK rather than Europe as a whole. As the crisis continued it became 'Europe's Migrant crisis' which was a far-reaching multi-faceted problem for Europe and the UK. Again as it involved migrants it was a problem that needed to be dealt with and the migrants needed to be excluded from Europe. Their claims for international protection were largely seen as illegitimate and secondary to the need to enforce national border controls.

Up to this point the changes in the name of the crisis referred only to geographical markers, which worked to highlight the level (and proximity) of the 'threat' that migrants posed. However, following the publications of photographs of a drowned boy there was a sudden shift from 'migrant' to 'refugee'. This was important as it signalled an increase in the sympathetic representations of those involved in the crisis. As refugee has been shown to be a more positive category (e.g. Kirkwood et al., 2015) it suggested that those involved were in genuine need of support. Slowly, and particularly following the terrorist attack in Paris, there was a return of the use of 'migrant' as the threat of terrorism became linked with the crisis. This meant an ending of more sympathetic representations of people involved in the crisis and a return to the notion of threat.

This analysis therefore demonstrates the significance of the terms used to describe categories of migrants/refugees and the name of the crisis they are involved in. This develops existing literature on the use of categories in debates about refugees and asylum seekers (Goodman & Speer, 2007) by showing how the dominant term used to describe a major news event has implications for the way in which that event is presented. These findings further extend this by demonstrating how dominant terms used in news events are based upon category use, but also respond to key events (i.e. the shift to 'refugee crisis' following the publication of the photographs of a drowned child and the shift back to 'migrant crisis' following the Paris terrorist attacks). What this means is that the name given to the 'crisis' has an impact on the corresponding treatment of the people involved, so that the variants of the 'migrant crisis' infers people that must be excluded, potentially by force (e.g. extract one) whereas the 'refugee crisis' infers people that could be helped. The geographical marker of the 'migrant crisis' (Mediterranean, Calais, Europe) has also been shown to be important as this helps to signify the level of threat that the 'migrants' are deemed to be bringing, so that the 'Mediterranean crisis' was presented as a relatively distant threat to Europe's borders, the 'Calais Migrant crisis' was presented as a major threat to the UK's borders and 'Europe's Migrant crisis' was presented as a wide-ranging and general threat to the whole of Europe, including the UK. Whereas previous research on recent media debates on migration in the UK have found that economic concerns have shaped reporting (Crawley, McMahon & Jones 2016), our examination has found that security has come to the fore as the predominant media frame.

Whilst much of the terminology around the 'crisis', and therefore exactly what the crisis constituted and how it should be dealt with, was shown to be in flux, one

element that remained a constant was that there was a crisis. This is interesting for two reasons. First because people had been drowning in their attempts to reach Europe for some time before the crisis was first named, suggesting that there was nothing new about the events that became so prominent during 2015. Second it appears that the crisis was one for the European states that people were entering, rather than for the people travelling to Europe. This can be seen perhaps most clearly in the name '*Europe's* Migrant crisis' where the crisis is Europe's not those risking, or indeed often actually, drowning on route. At the very least this suggests a basic 'us and them' dichotomy (Lynn & Lea, 2003) where non-Europeans are a problematic 'them' compared to the European 'us', but also hints at a hierarchy where the migrants'/refugees' lives are worth less than the comfort of Europeans. This suggests that displays of sympathy directed at refugees are limited to those at a distance, rather than those who reach Europe. The crisis is therefore one for Europe, rather than a humanitarian crisis of people fleeing war and persecution.

A particularly worrying implication of this analysis is how quickly the displays of sympathy directed towards refugees, which had developed following the printing of images of a drowned refugee child, ended following the Paris terrorist attacks. While both events are tragic, the loss of life amongst refugees (3,692 in 2015) massively outweighs the loss of life to terrorism in Europe and the 'crisis' is an opportunity to support refugees arriving in Europe. This represents a serious challenge for refugee advocates and means that refugees are likely to continue drowning in their thousands.

## **Conclusion**

This analysis has identified the many ways in which the refugee/migrant crisis that came to prominence in 2015 has been represented. It has been shown that the terminology used to describe it changed following the reporting of key news events. The terminology used is not simply a neutral way of reporting on what is happening, but instead works to present those involved in different ways – as either deserving of sympathy and refuge or as a threat to (different parts of) Europe. The representation of the crisis as a 'refugee crisis' coincided with more positive and inclusionary representations of the people involved than the exclusionary talk around the various migrant crises which presented those involved as a threat that may need to be dealt with through force.

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